

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 SSO-00 INRE-00
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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH
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S/PRS MR CARTER(INFO)
SSM MR MC ANDREW
NEA/ARN MR REUTHER
NEA/PAB MR LANDE
H MR FLATEN (INFO)
NEA/MS GRIFFIN
NEA/IRN MR NAAS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR
CIA
NSA
DOD

NCS

UNCLAS STATE 055231

NATO FOR ATHERTON; CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 11

1.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 11,
1977:

SPOKESMAN: GOOD AFTERNOON. BEFORE MAKING ANNOUNCEMENTS,
I WILL INTRODUCE AMBASSADOR DOUGLAS HECK, WHO, AS YOU KNOW,
IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF COMBATTING TERRORISM. HE
HAS ABOUT FIVE MINUTES TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS WITH
REGARD TO THE DEPARTMENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE INCIDENTS
OF RECENT HOURS, AND THEN WE WILL GO ON TO THE REGULAR
BRIEFING.

AMBASSADOR HECK.

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Q. COULD YOU GIVE US A CHRONOLOGY OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN
THIS AFFAIR FROM THE TIME YOU WERE FIRST CALLED INTO IT
ON WEDNESDAY?

AMBASSADOR HECK: I FIRST HEARD ABOUT IT ABOUT 2:15 THAT
DAY. I CHECKED WITH WHAT APPEARED TO BE THE OBVIOUS
AGENCIES: THE WHITE HOUSE, F.B.I., AND THE METROPOLITAN

POLICE, AND THEN STOOD DOWN BECAUSE THIS APPEARED TO BE,
AT THE OUTSET, AN INCIDENT THAT WAS IN THE HANDS OF THE
METROPOLITAN POLICE, WHO WERE IN CHARGE.

WE CONTINUED TO FOLLOW THE INCIDENT VERY CLOSELY, OF
COURSE, AND SOMEWHERE AROUND 3:30 -- I CAN'T REMEMBER
PRECISELY -- I RECEIVED A CALL FROM DEPUTY CHIEF RABE OF
THE METROPOLITAN POLICE, WHO WAS ONE OF THE KEY
NEGOTIATORS. HE ASKED ME TO SEE HIM UP AT THE B'NAI
B'RITH BUILDING. I WENT THERE. HIS CONCERN WAS TO
ADDRESS AND DEAL WITH ONE OF THE DEMANDS THAT HAD BEEN
PUT FORWARD BY THIS GROUP, THEIR SPOKESMAN, INVOLVING
IN SOME MANNER COMMUNICATION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF
MUSLIM COUNTRIES, OR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES, IN THE UNITED
STATES.

IT WASN'T CLEAR AT FIRST WHETHER IT WAS DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES OR OTHERS. UNDER THE ASSUMPTION IT MIGHT INVOLVE SOME DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES, THE CHIEF THOUGHT THAT SOMEBODY FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE THERE TO HELP HIM. HE CALLED ME BECAUSE HE IS A MEMBER OF A WORKING GROUP, OF WHICH I AM THE CHAIRMAN, AND WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER CLOSELY OVER A NUMBER OF MONTHS ON PROBLEMS RELATED TO TERRORISM. THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF MY ASSOCIATION WITH THIS INCIDENT WHICH CONTINUED TILL THIS MORNING. EXACTLY WHO STARTED THIS, IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE, BECAUSE ABOUT THE SAME TIME THE CHIEF WAS CALLING ME, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT WAS VOLUNTEERING HIS SERVICES TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT. NOW, WHO FIRST INITIATED THIS, I CANNOT SAY PRECISELY. THE FACT IS, THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR VOLUNTEERED HIS SERVICES AND A NEED FOR A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN ISLAMIC COUNTRY HAD BEEN EXPRESSED, AND THESE TWO EVENTS HAPPILY CAME TOGETHER.

I GOT IN TOUCH WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT. HE TOLD ME-- AND THIS WAS PROBABLY AROUND 4 OR 4:30 -- HE ALSO GOT IN TOUCH WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF PAKISTAN.

Q. WHO DID?

AMBASSADOR HECK: THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR. THE REASON FOR THIS WAS THAT THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR FELT THAT SINCE THE ISLAMIC CENTER WAS INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT, AND SOME OF HIS NATIONALS WERE AT THE ISLAMIC CENTER, AND SINCE THERE MIGHT BE A NEED FOR REPRESENTATION OF ISLAMIC MISSIONS, AND SPEED MIGHT BE OF ESSENCE, THE OBVIOUS CANDIDATE TO ACT ON BEHALF OF -- IF THERE WAS A

NEED FOR SOMEBODY TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THIS GROUP, WAS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE ISLAMIC CENTER. AND PLEASE DON'T HOLD ME TO THAT TITLE BECAUSE I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE EXACT TITLE, BUT THE ISLAMIC AMBASSADORS HAVE REPRESENTATION ON THIS GOVERNING BOARD THAT RUNS THE CENTER.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THAT GOVERNING BOARD THIS YEAR IS ARDESHIR ZAHEDI, THE AMBASSADOR OF IRAN. HE WAS OUT OF TOWN AT THAT TIME, SO THE ACTING CHAIRMAN, THE AMBASSADOR OF PAKISTAN WAS INVITED, AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR, TO COME ALONG. SO WE PROCEEDED TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS SOMEWHERE AROUND 5 O'CLOCK THAT WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON. WE WERE JOINED BY THE AMBASSADOR OF IRAN WHEN HE GOT OFF THE AIRCRAFT, SOMEWHERE AROUND MIDNIGHT, UNCLASSIFIED

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AND HEARD OF THE INCIDENT, PROCEEDED DIRECTLY TO THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS. HE WAS THERE IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THIS GROUP. SO WE HAD THE CHAIRMAN, THE VICE-CHAIRMAN, AND THE AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT WHO HAD VOLUNTEERED HIS SERVICES.

THEY STAYED AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS UNTIL SOMEWHERE AROUND 8 O'CLOCK THE NEXT MORNING, AND THEN CAME BACK LATER ON THURSDAY AND WERE THERE UNTIL THE SUCCESSFUL DENOUEMENT OF THIS EPISODE EARLY THIS MORNING.

Q. WHEN DID THEY RETURN ON THURSDAY MORNING?

AMBASSADOR HECK: I CAN'T TELL YOU PRECISELY BECAUSE I WAS OVER HERE FOR A PART OF THURSDAY MORNING, BUT IT WAS SOMEWHERE AROUND TEN O'CLOCK THURSDAY MORNING -- TEN OR ELEVEN, SOMEWHERE AROUND THERE THURSDAY MORNING -- THEY GOT BACK TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS. WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THEY MIGHT BE INVOLVED ACTIVELY IN THE DISCUSSIONS THAT WERE BEING HELD, IT WAS FELT THAT ON BEHALF OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WHO WAS IN OVERALL CHARGE OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THIS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHOULD OFFICIALLY INVITE THESE AMBASSADORS TO HELP EXPRESS HIS APPRECIATION FOR THEIR VOLUNTEERING THEIR SERVICES, AND SO, UNDER THE INVITATION OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, THESE THREE GENTLEMEN CONTINUED THEIR COOPERATION WITH THE POLICE AUTHORITIES DURING THE DAY AND THE NIGHT AND THIS MORNING.

Q. WHEN WAS THAT INVITATION TENDERED?

AMBASSADOR HECK: AS NEAR AS I CAN RECALL NOW, SOMEWHERE AROUND ONE OR TWO O'CLOCK YESTERDAY AFTERNOON.

Q. DID YOU ADVISE THE METROPOLITAN POLICE OF THE EFFECT OF COUNTER-TERRORIST TACTICS, OR TERRORIST UNCLASSIFIED

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PSYCHOLOGY, OR DID YOU TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE HANDLING OF THE SITUATION IN ADDITION TO SERVING IN THE OTHER FUNCTION?

AMBASSADOR HECK: WELL, I WEAR TWO HATS IN THIS JOB AND I HAD TWO JOBS DURING THIS INCIDENT: ONE HAT IS FOR THE OFFICE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT THAT DEALS WITH TERRORISM. THE OTHER IS AS CHAIRMAN OF THIS WORKING GROUP WHICH IS AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL HAT. I WAS ASSISTING IN THIS EPISODE TO HELP THE AMBASSADORS AND BE SUPPORTIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE INsofar AS THEIR ACTIVITIES WERE CONCERNED. SECONDLY, MY OFFICE HAS

ACQUIRED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH THESE KINDS OF INCIDENTS, AND WE WERE THERE TO HELP THE POLICE AS THEY NEEDED IT. THEY WERE IN CHARGE; THEY WERE RUNNING THE SHOW.

Q. HOW DID IT DEVELOP THAT THE THREE AMBASSADORS WENT IN TO SPEAK WITH MR. KHAALIS? WHOSE IDEA? HOW DID IT EVOLVE?

AMBASSADOR HECK: AGAIN, IT'S HARD TO BE PRECISE BECAUSE THIS MEETING RESULTED FROM A SERIES OF COMMUNICATION BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN THE NEGOTIATORS, THE NEGOTIATING TEAM, AND KHAALIS.

Q. WERE THE AMBASSADORS ON THE PHONE TALKING TO HIM YESTERDAY AFTERNOON?

AMBASSADOR HECK: ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT, THE AMBASSADOR OF PAKISTAN TALKED TO HIM SEVERAL TIMES, AND IN FACT, HE TALKED WITH HIM THURSDAY MORNING EARLY. BY THURSDAY AFTERNOON, THE OTHER TWO AMBASSADORS THAT WERE THERE HAD JOINED HIM IN THESE CONVERSATION, AT ONE POINT ON THURSDAY EVENING -- EARLY YESTERDAY EVENING -- KHAALIS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN EXPOSING HIS CONCERNS, HIS UNCLASSIFIED

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GRIEVANCES, TO A REPRESENTATIVE OF A MUSLIM COUNTRY, AND OUT OF THAT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST DEVELOPED THE PARTICIPATION OF THESE THREE AMBASSADORS IN THE TALKS THAT WENT ON IN THE LOBBY OF THE B'NAI B'RITH BUILDING LAST EVENING. THE TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WERE ALL IN ENGLISH. OF COURSE, WHEN THE AMBASSADORS WERE ON THE PHONE, THERE WERE A LOT OF GREETINGS, RELIGIOUS AND OTHER SALUTATIONS IN ARABIC.

Q. KHAALIS HAS LEARNED ARABIC?

AMBASSADOR HECK: APPARENTLY SO. I DON'T KNOW HOW WELL HE KNOWS ARABIC, BUT HE IS FAMILIAR WITH MANY OF THE RELIGIOUS GREETINGS AND EXPRESSIONS.

Q. WERE YOU PRESENT DURING THE MEETING WITH KHAALIS AND THE AMBASSADORS LAST NIGHT?

AMBASSADOR HECK: NO, I WAS NOT.

SPOKESMAN: I WOULD JUST LIKE TO READ INTO THE RECORD THE STATEMENT THAT WE ISSUED THIS MORNING BY SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE WITH REGARD TO THE PARTICIPATION OF THE THREE AMBASSADORS YESTERDAY.

"I WISH TO EXPRESS PROFOUND APPRECIATION FOR THE

EXTRAORDINARILY VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY THE AMBASSADORS OF IRAN, PAKISTAN AND EGYPT OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS IN ACHIEVING THE RELEASE OF 134 HOSTAGES HELD AT THREE LOCATIONS IN WASHINGTON. SOON AFTER THE INCIDENT BEGAN, AMBASSADOR ARDESHIR ZAHEDI OF IRAN, AMBASSADOR SAHABZADA YAQUB-KHAN OF PAKISTAN, AND AMBASSADOR ASHRAF A. GHORBAL OF EGYPT VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST MAYOR WALTER WASHINGTON AND THE METROPOLITAN POLICE AUTHORITIES IN FREEING THE HOSTAGES. AT THE REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, THE THREE AMBASSADORS AGREE-
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D TO MEET PERSONALLY WITH THE LEADER OF THE GROUP HOLDING THE HOSTAGES IN AN EFFORT TO END THE INCIDENT WITHOUT FURTHER BLOODSHED. THEY SUCCEEDED BRILLIANTLY. THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE INCIDENT IS A TRIBUTE TO THEIR INTELLIGENCE, COURAGE, AND SENSITIVITY. TO THESE THREE AMBASSADORS -- HUMANITARIANS AND DIPLOMATS IN THE HIGHEST SENSE -- AND TO THE COUNTRIES WHICH THEY REPRESENT, WE OFFER THE GRATITUDE OF THE UNITED STATES."

Q. FRED, THERE'S A STORY IN THE TIMES THIS MORNING THAT QUOTES THE SECRETARY AS TELLING A JEWISH GROUP THAT THE UNITED STATES EXPECTS ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW FROM "VIRTUALLY ALL," TERRITORY OCCUPIED SINCE 1967.

A. YES?

Q. CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT HE SAID THAT?

A. THE SECRETARY SAID NOTHING OF THE KIND. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF THE MAJOR AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS, THE SECRETARY REFERRED TO THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS;

AND I BELIEVE YESTERDAY I EXCERPTED THOSE REMARKS FOR YOU. BUT, BASICALLY, THE PRESIDENT SAID: "I THINK THIS IS GOING TO BE A LONG, TEDIOUS PROCESS. WE ARE GOING TO MOUNT A MAJOR EFFORT IN OUR OWN GOVERNMENT IN 1977 TO BRING THE PARTIES TO GENEVA. OBVIOUSLY, ANY AGREEMENT HAS TO BE BETWEEN THE PARTIES CONCERNED. WE WILL ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY WHEN OUR GOOD OFFICES WILL SERVE WELL. I AM NOT TRYING TO PREDISPOSE OUR OWN NATION'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WHAT MIGHT BE THE ULTIMATE DETAILS OF THE AGREEMENT THAT CAN MEAN SO MUCH TO WORLD PEACE."

NOW, THE SECRETARY DID NOT GO BEYOND THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS IN THE DISCUSSION WITH THE JEWISH PRESIDENTS'
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GROUP.

Q. WELL, YOU'RE SAYING HE DIDN'T GO BEYOND THAT ASPECT OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS THAT YOU QUOTED OR THE OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WHICH YOU DID NOT QUOTE IN WHICH YOU REFERRED TO ONLY MINOR RECTIFICATIONS OF THE '67 AGREEMENT?

A. I'M JUST SAYING HE DIDN'T GO BEYOND THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS THAT YOU DIDN'T QUOTE?

A. THE THEME OF THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS WITH THIS GROUP WAS PRECISELY DRAWN FROM THE TWO QUOTATIONS THAT I HAVE GIVEN YOU.

Q. WHEN WILL THE SECRETARY BE SEEING THE ARAB AMBASSADORS?

A. I'M SORRY. DID YOU HAVE A FOLLOW-UP ON THIS ONE?

Q. YES, THE SAME STORY.

A. YES?

Q. THE TIMES SUGGESTED THAT BOTH THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER HAD PICKED OUT THOSE TWO PARAGRAPHS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS IN SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS -- NOT ONLY WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH OFFICIALS. IS THERE ANY REASON TO PICK OUT THOSE TWO PARAGRAPHS RATHER THAN SOMETHING ELSE?

A. THAT PART OF THE ARTICLE REFERRING TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL -- I THINK YOU WOULD HAVE TO ADDRESS A QUESTION TO THE WHITE HOUSE ON THAT.

Q. I'LL REPHRASE IT. WHY DID YOU AND WHY DID THE UNCLASSIFIED

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SECRETARY PICK OUT THOSE TWO PARTICULAR PARAGRAPHS -- WHICH ARE LESS SUBSTANTIVE THAN OTHER PARAGRAPHS IN THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS?

A. I JUST SAID THAT WAS THE THEME OF THE SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH THE JEWISH LEADERS.

NOW, MARVIN, YOU WERE ASKING ABOUT THE ARAB AMBASSADORS.

Q. THE ARAB AMBASSADORS.

A. YES. AT THE REQUEST OF THE DEAN OF THE ARAB AMBASSADORS -- HE'S LEBANESE AMBASSADOR KABBANI -- THE SECRETARY HAS AGREED TO MEET AT 11 O'CLOCK TOMORROW

WITH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR GHORBAL, JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR SALAH, AND SYRIAN AMBASSADOR KABBANI. THERE'S THE SAME NAME THERE; THERE MAY BE A CONFUSION. I SAID YESTERDAY IT WAS GOING TO BE FAIRLY SHORTLY, SO IT'S BEEN SET FOR TOMORROW.

Q. WHAT PART OF THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE WILL THE SECRETARY READ TO THEM? (LAUGHTER.)

2. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION TAKEN AT THE MARCH 10 PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. DOES THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AGREE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON'S STATEMENT IN THE KNESSET THAT INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF ARAB PRISONERS BY THE U.S. CONSUL GENERAL IN JERUSALEM WAS NOT IN CONFORMITY WITH HIS STATUS AND FUNCTION?

A. THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION ARE AS FOLLOWS: ON JANUARY 6 A DELEGATION OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WEST BANK CALLED ON OUR CONSUL GENERAL TO PRESENT A UNCLASSIFIED

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PETITION CONCERNING THE CONDITIONS OF WEST BANKERS HELD IN ISRAELI PRISONS. OUR CONSUL GENERAL UNDERTOOK TO STUDY THE PETITION, TO INFORM THE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON, AND TO CONSULT THE EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV AND THE LOCAL OFFICE OF THE ICRC. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, AN

ERRONEOUS REPORT IN THE ARABIC PRESS THAT THE CONSUL GENERAL HAD PROMISED TO "INTERVENE" ON BEHALF OF THE PRISONERS.

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

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Subject: DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 11 1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 11, 1977:
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, HANAFI MUSLIMS, (HECK, DOUGLAS), (HECK, L DOUGLAS)
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